

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

A complete listing of the claims is as follows:

Claim 1. (*Currently Amended*) An article of footwear comprising:

an upper;

a bottom assembly including at least one wear sole and at least one element for reinforcing said bottom assembly, said at least one element for reinforcing said bottom assembly including a first reinforcement element, said first reinforcement element extending in a longitudinal direction;

at least one element for reinforcing said upper, said at least one element for reinforcing said upper including a second reinforcement element;

a flexible coupling between at least said first reinforcement element and at least said second reinforcement element, said flexible coupling being flexible at least in a direction transverse to said longitudinal direction, said first reinforcement element and said second reinforcement element being coupled together via said flexible coupling.

Claim 2. (*Original*) An article of footwear according to claim 1, wherein:

said flexible coupling comprises a shock-absorbing intermediary sole.

Claim 3. (*Original*) An article of footwear according to claim 2, wherein:

each of said at least one element for reinforcing said bottom assembly and each of said at least one element for reinforcing said upper is assembled to said intermediary sole with adhesive.

Claim 4. (*Original*) An article of footwear according to claim 3, wherein:

said intermediary sole comprises EVA.

Claim 5. (*Original*) An article of footwear according to claim 1, wherein:
said element for reinforcing said upper is also coupled to said upper.

Claim 6. (*Original*) An article of footwear according to claim 1, wherein:
said element for reinforcing said upper comprises at least one portion
extending around an area adapted to surround a rear area of a wearer's foot.

Claim 7. (*Original*) An article of footwear according to claim 5, wherein:
said element for reinforcing said upper comprises a medial arm
extending along a medial side of a rear area of a wearer's foot and a lateral arm extending
along a lateral side of said rear area of the wearer's foot.

Claim 8. (*Original*) An article of footwear according to claim 7, wherein:
said medial and lateral arms of said element for reinforcing said
upper are associated, respectively, with medial and lateral portions, of said element for
reinforcing said bottom assembly.

Claim 9. (*Currently Amended*) An article of footwear according to claim 8, wherein:
said elements for reinforcing said upper and bottom assembly have
asymmetrical shapes with respect to mechanical properties of reinforcement of said upper
and said bottom assembly that are asymmetrical on said medial and lateral sides,
respectively thereby providing asymmetrical reinforcement of said upper and bottom
assemblies with respect to said medial and lateral sides

Claim 10. (*New*) An article of footwear according to claim 2, wherein:
said intermediary sole comprises surface depressions; and
said first and second reinforcement elements are assembled to said
surface depressions of said intermediary sole.

Claim 11. (New) An article of footwear according to claim 10, wherein:

 said first and second reinforcement elements are spaced apart.

Claim 12. (New) An article of footwear according to claim 10, wherein:

 said first and second reinforcement elements are spaced apart at least in a plantar arch zone of said bottom assembly.

Claim 13. (New) An article of footwear according to claim 10, wherein:

 said first and second reinforcement elements are spaced apart at least in a plantar arch zone of said bottom assembly by no more than 5 millimeters.

Claim 14. (New) An article of footwear according to claim 10, wherein:

 said first and second reinforcement elements are assembled to said surface depressions of said intermediary sole with adhesive.

Claim 15. (New) An article of footwear according to claim 2, wherein:

 said intermediary sole comprises surface depressions; and

 said first and second reinforcement elements are assembled to said surface depressions of said intermediary sole with adhesive, leaving a clearance between said first and second reinforcement elements at least in a plantar arch zone of the bottom assembly.

Claim 16. (New) An article of footwear according to claim 2, wherein:

 said second reinforcement element encircles a rear end of said upper and extends forwardly in the form of medial and lateral returns;

 each of said returns of said second reinforcement element extends transversely toward a respective edge of said first reinforcement element, leaving a clearance with said first reinforcement element.

Claim 17. (New) An article of footwear according to claim 16, wherein:

 said clearance between said medial return and said first reinforcement element is no greater than 5 millimeters; and

 said clearance between said lateral return and said first reinforcement element is no greater than 5 millimeters.

Claim 18. (New) An article of footwear comprising:

 a bottom assembly including at least one wear sole and at least one element for reinforcing said bottom assembly, said at least one element for reinforcing said bottom assembly comprising a longitudinally extending first reinforcement element;

 an upper mounted on said bottom assembly;

 at least one element for reinforcing said upper, said at least one element for reinforcing said upper comprising a second reinforcement element;

 an intermediary sole comprising a shock-absorbing material extending from a heel area of said bottom assembly to a toe area of said bottom assembly;

 said first and second reinforcement elements being separately attached to said intermediary sole with adhesive;

 said second reinforcement element extending around a rear of said upper and a rear of said bottom assembly, and extending forwardly in the form of medial and lateral returns;

 each of said returns of said second reinforcement element extending transversely toward a respective edge of said first reinforcement element, leaving a clearance with said first reinforcement element.

Claim 19. (New) An article of footwear according to claim 18, wherein:

 said clearance between said medial return and said first reinforcement element is no greater than 5 millimeters; and

 said clearance between said lateral return and said first reinforcement element is no greater than 5 millimeters.

Claim 20. (New) An article of footwear according to claim 19, wherein:

 said intermediary sole has depressions for receiving said first and second reinforcement elements, said first and second reinforcement elements being attached to said intermediary sole in said depressions with adhesive.